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Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Tuesday 28 March 2017

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mardi 28 mars 2017

Standing Committee on
Government Agencies

Intended appointments

Comité permanent des
organismes gouvernementaux

Nominations prévues



Chair: Cristina Martins
Clerk: Sylwia Przezdziecki

Présidente : Cristina Martins
Greffeure : Sylwia Przezdziecki

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Tuesday 28 March 2017

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

COMITÉ PERMANENT DES
ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Mardi 28 mars 2017

The committee met at 0902 in committee room 2.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the Standing Committee on Government Agencies for March 28, 2017. Ms. Vernile?

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Thank you, Chair. As we begin this morning, on a point of order, I think it would be appropriate at this time to give Mr. Pettapiece the opportunity to apologize and withdraw the sexist remarks he made last week regarding a very accomplished woman scientist, directing her to go to the kitchen and fix the coffee.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Mr. Pettapiece, there was a point of order—

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I apologize and withdraw.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Pardon?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I apologize and withdraw.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Okay. Thank you, Mr. Pettapiece.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: And withdraw?

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): And withdraw, that's right.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I said that.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): That's what I think I heard. I heard an apology and a withdrawal. Thank you, Mr. Pettapiece.

Is there any further discussion or any other comments on the comments made last week or anything anyone else may have heard? If there's no further discussion at this point, then we will move on to the appointments review.

We have two intended appointees to hear from this morning. We will consider the concurrences following the interviews.

INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

MR. WILLIAM GREENHALGH

Review of intended appointment, selected by third party: William Greenhalgh, intended appointee as vice-chair, Public Accountants Council for the Province of Ontario.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Our first intended appointee today is Mr. William Greenhalgh, nominated as vice-chair, Public Accountants Council for the Province of Ontario. Please come forward and take your

seat. Welcome, and thank you very much for being here this morning.

You may begin with a brief statement, if you wish. Members of each party will then have 10 minutes to ask you questions. Any time used for your statement will be deducted from the government's time for questioning, and when that time does come, questioning will begin with the official opposition. Thank you very much. You may begin.

Mr. William Greenhalgh: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. My name is William Greenhalgh, Bill Greenhalgh. I am presently CEO of the Human Resources Professionals Association. We have around 24,000 members—I've been there about 11 years—and those members cover about 9,000 companies around Ontario and roughly represent around about 2.8 million employees.

I thought what I'd do is take maybe five or six minutes to go over my background from a business point of view and also from a governance point of view and then maybe say a few words about why I think my background fits this particular role. I should also mention that I've been on the Public Accountants Council as a regular member for the last three years. I was appointed in 2013, and that's just been renewed up to 2019. So I've been a member of that particular council.

Background-wise, I think you have a summary there. I've got about 40 years of experience, mostly in international operations. I'm not an HR professional. My background is mostly in running businesses. Going back a long way, I started as a nuclear engineer on atomic weapon design. I spent some time on that. I worked for an oil company for a while in the UK, and I was hired by Nortel in 1975 and I came to Canada. I had many different roles with Nortel in marketing and research and running various businesses. I set up factories in China and throughout the US.

I was then hired by Thomson Newspapers, so I spent four years as president of the Globe and Mail and two years as the chief executive officer for Thomson Newspapers in western Canada.

I then moved on to a company called Cinram and I was there for six years. Cinram was at that time the largest manufacturer in the world of compact discs and DVDs for audio and video companies. It was a roughly \$1.6-billion-a-year company when I left.

I moved on to a company called Shred-it, where I was chief operating officer. It's a private company. You've

probably seen their trucks around. They deal in on-site document shredding—basically security. I spent three years there.

Then I'd say I kind of semi-retired. My wife and I decided to do some travelling, so I did that for about a year, maybe slightly more. Then I got a call from HRPA, and I've been there now since 2006—roughly 11 years. We are the regulator in Ontario for the HR profession and we were covered by a legislative act back in 2012, which really appointed us as the regulator of the profession.

Background-wise, I've got a BSc in mechanical engineering, a master's degree from the London Business School in business, and I've been to Harvard for various certificate programs, six-week programs on marketing and manufacturing.

I'm also a chartered director. I graduated from the McMaster chartered director school back in 2009, I think it was.

In terms of board experience, I'm presently the corporate secretary of HRPA and I sit on all the various board committees. I've been a member of that since I started. I'm also a member of the Human Resources Research Institute board and, as I mentioned, I'm a government appointee to the Public Accountants Council.

I sit on the champion's council of the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association and I was awarded the Queen's jubilee medal in 2012 for contributions to palliative care in Canada.

In terms of other organizations, I actually chair a Canadian national committee right now on human resources. It's part of the Standards Council of Canada and it's reporting in to the International Organization for Standardization. We're developing programs and standards for human resources. As part of ISO, I chair an international organization with about 10 different countries around the world. It's a working group looking at a competency framework for human resources globally.

In the past I've been a member of various boards. I was on the Scarborough Hospital board for five years. I chaired the human resources committee and I was a member of the governance and planning committee. Other international boards: the Canadian Council of Human Resources Associations—I was a member of that board for about six years; the North American Human Resource Management Association; and then a global organization called the World Federation of People Management Associations.

I've had other board positions as well. I was on the Toronto Symphony board for a while and the commonwealth club of Canada for a while.

That's my basic background in operations, business and governance.

In terms of what I think I bring to the table, first of all, I've got a very broad business background in a whole range of industries at a very senior level, so I've got a very good understanding of how organizations and people work, and how committees work.

I've got a lot of board experience, both reporting in to boards—I reported to boards in a number of jobs when I

was a CEO—and I've been on boards where I've had the CEO reporting in. In fact, right now, I kind of semi-report to myself, because I'm the CEO reporting to the board and I'm also a board member of HRPA.

I've chaired committees and I've been on audit, governance and HR committees.

The final thing is that with HRPA, we've gone through a long process, from being, I would say, a fairly average organization association some years ago, where our main focus was on our members, and the whole concept of the profession and regulation, our public accountability, didn't really feature. Over the years, that has changed dramatically. In fact, with the act that was promulgated in 2012, that has really flipped our whole priorities around in the sense that today, our major goal is public protection, and it's all about regulation. The profession comes next, and then our members come after that, and the association is really at the end. So it has flipped our priorities around quite a bit.

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What I've developed over that period of time is a really fundamental understanding of the importance of regulation. That's why I was very interested in joining the Public Accountants Council, because it's the core of what they do. The whole area of regulation and licensing stems from the act that we have, and, for accountants, stems from the acts that they have.

That probably is a quick summary, a synopsis. I'm happy to answer any questions that anybody might have.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you very much. We will now begin with questioning. Mr. Pettapiece.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Thank you for being here this morning. I'm just going to concentrate on the operation of the council, here. There are some points that I have in my notes that were prepared. I'm going to read the points and ask your thoughts on these points.

It says that specifically, the role of the council is to oversee the activities of the bodies that have been designated as authorized to issue public accounting licences to their members, including developing and maintaining the standards that a designated body must meet in order to be authorized to license and govern the activities of its members as public accountants. Do you have any comments on that?

Mr. William Greenhalgh: On the role that the—

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Yes.

Mr. William Greenhalgh: I think it's vitally important. I think that this whole issue is about public accounting, about licensing and about the trust that everybody places in financial results that they see. For example, there may be people who have pension funds, or they invest in organizations. It's critically important that the numbers that they see—because they don't have access directly to organizations. They rely on public accountants to audit the books—comment on the financials, basically—and to provide their opinion on them.

I think it's very important that the people doing the auditing and reporting on those results are validated as

capable, that they have the competencies and that the standards are set very high. I think it's important that there is an independent organization such as the Public Accountants Council to make sure that those standards are met.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Okay. Since you know quite a bit about this council, is there anything that you could see as changing or improving—things that you'd like to see to improve this council?

Mr. William Greenhalgh: I think there are a number of things that we're dealing with right now. I think, first of all, there's the integration of the legacy accounting associations. The CGAs, the CMAs and the CAs over the last few years have come together into the CPAs. I think the integration of those is still ongoing. They're each covered by an individual act in Ontario. The one thing that is happening sometime, I presume, this year—we're not really quite sure of the timing, but it's on its way—is an act that covers CPAs as opposed to the individual accounting associations—an integrated act, effectively. That's one thing.

I think the second thing is the transition process. Some people were in the process of getting their auditing licence, and the integration happened in the middle. For those people who already had their auditing licence, that was fine. For the people who are starting afresh after it happened, it's fine. But there were a lot of people in transition. One of the things we've been working through right now—and it hasn't been completed—is to come up with a process that seems to be fair for the people in transition, but at the same time, to make sure that they meet the high standards that the whole auditing profession requires.

I think the third one, actually, is one that is going to have a major impact down the road. It's a technology called blockchain, which I think will fundamentally change how finance in general works. It's going to happen fairly quickly.

It's the technology that's used for bitcoin. Bitcoin has given it a very bad reputation, but most of the major banks in Canada are very involved in it right now. They're working with IBM. Basically, if you think of the Internet as transferring data, blockchain transfers value.

I think that's going to be a fundamental change and I think that's something that we have to be aware of, not so much as the Public Accountants Council but certainly the financial people. And not just licensed but also accountants in general have to be aware of the impact that will have.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: So when you say that transfers wealth—is that the term you used? Or "value," I'm sorry.

Mr. William Greenhalgh: It transfers value, yes.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: It transfers value?

Mr. William Greenhalgh: Yes.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I'm just trying to get my head around that. What does that mean, it transfers—

Mr. William Greenhalgh: Let me see if I can—

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: Currency.

Mr. William Greenhalgh: Sorry?

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: It's a currency.

Mr. William Greenhalgh: Bitcoin is a currency right now, but the technology underlining it is a process that assigns ownership, if you like. For example, say you had a car you wanted to sell or a painting you wanted to sell. You've got a number of ways of doing it. You can advertise it, you can whatever, but, essentially, at some point, you have to take it somewhere and collect the money and get a cheque or cash or whatever.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Okay.

Mr. William Greenhalgh: Whereas with blockchain, you can transfer the ownership right away, you get the money right away and it's supposedly an uncrackable system because it's held in many, many different places.

The analogy I'd use today, in banking, is, let's say, for example, I wanted to give you \$100 and I turned to you and I said, "I'd like you to drive to Mississauga and give it to someone else," and then he would drive back and give you the \$100. That's to some extent a bit of an analogy of how the banking system works because you write a cheque, it goes in, it's three or four days somewhere in the middle and then eventually it goes into your account. With blockchain, it happens instantly. The second that I say I give you the money, it's done. It's out of my account and into your account. It's a secure way of transferring the value of an asset that you own.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Okay.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Mr. Oosterhoff?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Thank you very much for coming in this morning. I just had a quick question. You've been on the Public Accountants Council since 2013; right?

Mr. William Greenhalgh: Yes.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: So that's four years now. What sort of changes have you seen? You mentioned this innovation, and I'm sure there have been a lot already in those short few years.

Where do you see it going and why do you think you're the best person to be involved in that?

Mr. William Greenhalgh: So where do I see the Public Accountants Council going?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: To adapt to some of these innovations.

Mr. William Greenhalgh: I think the one change is that integration with the three legacy accounting associations into one. The number of people on the board has been reduced from 17 to 11. There is still a government appointee majority; it'll be six to five or seven to four, whatever the number comes out to be. That has been one change as we have kind of migrated through that.

I think, as we move forward, the major activities will be—it's a bit in some ways like walking on two moving sidewalks at the same time because the standards of accounting are changing—that's for everybody—but at the same time, we're trying to bring the people who were caught in limbo, if you like, who were in the middle, up to the same level. That process of making sure that the standards that are set for a CPA, for example, advance in

line with how the profession evolves and, at the same time, bringing the other people up to those standards. There are many different people in different situations, so it's a fairly complex matrix of people, where they are and what they need to do. I think those are the challenges going forward.

There is also a succession issue because the contracts of the chair and of the CEO expire sometime in the next 12 months. Again, part of the role of—as a vice-chair of the council, I would sit on the governance committee, and one of their roles is to look at succession planning. Of course, coming from an HR background, that's what we do a lot of.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): You have just under two minutes.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: I just had one more question, actually. It was brought up here. What would you say to someone who said that the Public Accountants Council is just another unnecessary regulatory burden? I worked in federal politics on the Standing Joint Committee for Scrutiny of Regulations, and people come in and whine and complain about too many regulations.

Would you say this is something where you have a lot of people saying, "This is just a regulatory burden; we don't need it"? Most of the other provinces don't have agencies to oversee the professional bodies that issue public accounting licences. What's your response to that?

Mr. William Greenhalgh: I think it comes back to the purpose of regulation in the first place. It's all about public protection. It's making sure, for licensed accountants, for example, as I mentioned, that they're competent and capable and they are reporting on results that people can rely on. So at some point somebody has to—

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Okay. So, really quickly, would you think, then, that the provinces that don't have it are not reliable accountants or are not dependable accountants?

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Mr. William Greenhalgh: No, because they have actually, by proxy, upgraded their processes based on what Ontario has done, because of the transferability, that they have to meet certain standards. So they have been able to benefit.

In all honesty, I'm surprised—Nova Scotia has just moved now; they've brought in a regulatory authority. But I'm just surprised that other provinces don't. It's similar in HR. Only Quebec and Ontario have a regulatory authority in HR, but all the other provinces are working towards getting a regulatory role, and I think that may be down the road. I think it's absolutely vitally important to have a regulator of some kind, particularly for the auditing function.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you, Mr. Greenhalgh. We are now going to pass it on to Mr. Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Good morning, sir. How are you?

I'm probably the last guy that should be asking about money and banks—just thought I'd say that.

Anyway—and you're not special on this; I ask this every week and my colleagues know it—have you ever donated to any political party?

Mr. William Greenhalgh: Not that I know of. I've been—

Mr. Wayne Gates: Well, I'll give you credit. You're the first one that doesn't know that answer.

Mr. William Greenhalgh: Let me explain why. I went to a Trillium dinner some years ago, maybe 2008, 2009, and I paid for it. I don't know if that's a donation or not. I don't know. But that's the only one.

Mr. Wayne Gates: That's fair; that's good.

I understand that you have a semi-long track record with the Public Accountants Council for the Province of Ontario. You have been with the organization since 2013, I believe. That's correct?

Mr. William Greenhalgh: Yes.

Mr. Wayne Gates: In your view, what are some of the challenges that the council faces?

Mr. William Greenhalgh: Coming back to and maybe expanding a bit more on what I was saying earlier on, certainly this transition. I wouldn't say it's a challenge. I think it's just something we have to work with and deal with. The new act coming in, we're not quite sure what that will say, so that's one thing that we are aware of.

I think the second thing is the integration or the grandfathering, or the transitional process for the people that didn't quite make it through the gate before the integration happened. Dealing with that is complicated. It's not a challenge per se. It's just there are many different people who have got different levels of qualification. At the same time, the profession is moving forward, so we have to make sure that the process for the people that are in transition is equitable and fair, and at the same time meets the standard of the profession in general.

So I think those are two. I mentioned the succession plan, and I think the other one is the blockchain one that I mentioned. I think those are some of the things that we're dealing with right now.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Okay. I don't know if you would know this answer, but you've been there for a while: Has the council ever faced any accusations that they may represent an unnecessary regulatory layer, and how would you respond to that accusation?

Mr. William Greenhalgh: The answer is no. I've never heard of an accusation on that basis. Personally, I think it's really very important. We did do a survey about two years ago, an independent survey, and asked about the role of the council, and it came back very positively and that in fact it was very important. I think, again, it comes back to the whole issue of public protection and the reliance that everybody, whether they are financial companies or whether they are individuals, places on the figures and numbers that the licensed profession reports on.

Mr. Wayne Gates: The Public Accounting Act was introduced in 2004. Then, the Attorney General said that the new legislation may have the ability to provide small businesses and corporations with easier access to accounting services for their firms. Do you believe this is the case?

Mr. William Greenhalgh: It absolutely is. I know statistics on it, and I can talk anecdotally as well. The second that it happened, there were 10% more auditors who came in from the CGA, so that added 10% to the group immediately. I think the quality has improved immensely, because prior to that there were individuals who were required to remain licensed even though they didn't audit. It was kind of a hangover from the prior act, I guess. They were then relieved of that. Partners of large accounting firms, for example, had to be licensed, but they wouldn't necessarily—they might be a tax partner and not practise auditing at all. That changed things dramatically. So the quality of the licensed accounting went up and the number of firms that have been created—whether it's to do with this or the entrepreneurial drive of many people or a combination of the two, there are so many new, small accounting firms that have been created.

I know from my own situation—we're a small company. We only have 50 employees, so our ability to get—the selection we have or the choice we have in terms of potential auditors has grown hugely. In fact, the price that we pay for our audit, even though it's become more complicated for a number of different reasons, has actually been about the same for five years. So it has not just been the accessibility; it has also been the affordability.

I say anecdotally, as a small company, I can attest to the fact that it certainly helped us.

Mr. Wayne Gates: You might have answered a little bit of this, but I think I'm talking a little broader than just your company. Have you noticed an increase in affordability or accessibility for Ontario small businesses?

Mr. William Greenhalgh: That's pretty much what I was saying. As a small business ourselves, definitely we have much more choice in terms of getting quotes. We get a quote on our audit process every three years, and the options we have have increased dramatically. Also, many of the big five are interested now, which they weren't maybe some years ago, and the price has remained pretty much constant. In fact, I'm not even sure it has gone up in three or four years.

As a small business—I can't comment on small businesses in general, but certainly in our case it has been a great act.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Maybe you could list the big five.

Mr. William Greenhalgh: There's Pricewaterhouse—sorry, I've forgotten it.

Mr. Wayne Gates: That's a big one.

Mr. William Greenhalgh: A big one, yes. It used to be the big five.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Okay, I appreciate that. Thank you.

The Public Accountants Council oversees activities of bodies that are designated/authorized to issue public accounting licences to their members. It is my understanding that after the unification of the profession in 2014, the Chartered Professional Accountants of Ontario, CPAO, is now the only designated body authorized to

issue public accounting licences. In your opinion, what are some of the ongoing challenges that the CPAO may face in the coming years?

Mr. William Greenhalgh: I may be repeating something I've already said—

Mr. Wayne Gates: That's fair.

Mr. William Greenhalgh: The new act that will cover them hasn't been identified yet, so I think that's one of the things they're going to be dealing with. And again, how their members transition through to the new standards and the evolution of those standards and the technology that I mentioned; I think those are some of the things that—the technology doesn't affect the PAC too much, but it certainly will affect accountants in general. Those are the challenges that CPAO will be dealing with.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I think I'm good. Thank you, sir.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you very much, Mr. Gates. We will now switch over the questioning to the government. Mr. Qaadri, you have three minutes.

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: Thank you, Mr. Greenhalgh. First of all, I would like to commend you on your very distinguished record of public service, from the Globe and Mail to the corporate side to the nuclear industry and, of course, your vast experience in public accounts.

Briefly, I wanted to ask you: How do you anticipate, following on some of the questions from the Tories, the digitization of the public accounts, whether it's money transfer or—and maybe you can explain to me what exactly is blockchain? Embedded within that question, tell us about your security concerns, because it seems no matter what level of—whether it's encryption, viral protection, malware protection, spear phishing avoidance etc., there seems to be no real way to secure large institutional public accounts frameworks.

Mr. William Greenhalgh: Let me start with the blockchain one. It's essentially a technology that when any transaction happens, it happens on multiple platforms globally. So when there's one transaction and it moves from, say, you to me, it's recorded in tens of thousands of different locations.

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The reason that people feel—certainly the banks, and that's one of the things they are dealing with right now: to figure out if this is actually correct or not. They're doing many, many trials to figure out how secure it is and is it hackable. But the basic reason it is not hackable is because it's recorded in so many different places. If you're going to hack a computer, then it would be your computer that I would be trying to hack. It's only one location. If I tried to hack 10,000 at the same time, it would be very, very difficult, if not impossible.

When I transfer from me to you, it's an encrypted, secure process recorded in a multiplicity of locations. Theoretically, it is completely and totally secure, but I guess we'll find out about that. There will be many, many statements about the security of everything on the Internet. I would wait and see as to whether that is actual-

ly the case. But from all of the stuff that I've read on it, it seems to be 99.99% accurate that it is a very secure transaction process.

Essentially, it can record anything. It can record stock certificates, your house, your car—whatever you own, it can be recorded as you owning it. When you transfer, the transfer is recorded as it being owned by someone else. It happens instantly. That's the blockchain part of it.

In terms of the digitization impacting accountants, it's already significantly under way in the sense that if you go back 20 years, an accountant would sit down—it was mostly hand-checking and ticking, and your taxes would be filled in by hand. Now, there are all kinds of tax programs. You can do it yourself, or your accountant can do it—

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you, Mr. Greenhalgh. That concludes the time for this interview right now. I'm going to ask you to step down, and we will consider the concurrences following all of the interviews here today.

Mr. William Greenhalgh: Thank you.

MS. NORMA LAMONT

Review of intended appointment, selected by third party: Norma Lamont, intended appointee as member, grant review team—Champlain—Ontario Trillium Foundation.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Our next intended appointee today is Norma Lamont, nominated as member, grant review team—Champlain—Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Please come forward and take a seat, Ms. Lamont. Thank you very much for being here today. You may begin with a brief statement, if you wish. Members of each party will then have up to 10 minutes to ask you questions. Any time used for your statement will be deducted from the government's time for questions. Once that time does begin, we will begin questioning with the third party.

Welcome, Ms. Lamont. You may begin.

Ms. Norma Lamont: Thank you, Madam Chair, and good morning. Thank you for the time to speak with you this morning.

Assuming that you have my resumé in front of you, I thought I would spend a minute trying to explain why I'm interested in serving on the grant review team, Champlain, of the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

In Ottawa, I sit on the board of directors of OCAPDD—that's the Ottawa-Carleton Association for Persons with Developmental Disabilities—and I represent that organization on OASIS, the Ontario Agencies Serving Individuals with Special Needs. Mr. Pettapiece, thank you. You recently attended a meeting, and we appreciate that.

As a result of my involvement in OCAPDD, I joined ECC, Every Canadian Counts, which is an organization advocating for a national insurance plan for individuals with disabilities—all disabilities. Based on a model

coming out of Australia, we found widespread support for it across the country with those individuals and organizations that we have been able to reach.

But, as is always the case, such activities require funding. Both OCAPDD and OASIS helped in that regard. In our fundraising efforts, we applied to the Ontario Trillium Foundation and, as it should be, the application process was very detail-oriented.

It was during that process that I looked more closely at the Ontario Trillium Foundation and its goals. Having spent 23 years working for a charitable foundation, it occurred to me that I might serve on this organization, contributing some of my experience that I had gained as a fundraiser.

As the children's hospital foundation's vice-president, it was my job to knock on doors and solicit funding for our kids. In doing so, I learned of the passion of groups, organizations, individuals and corporations throughout Ottawa, the Ottawa Valley and along the seaway. Without fail, they worked hard to solicit sponsorship, to arrange events, to sell tickets to help make a difference in the lives of the children served by CHEO. It was an honour for me to represent CHEO and the foundation at many of those events throughout our catchment area. Often, I felt like a politician visiting in my riding. The difference is that I always got a cheque.

To give you a little bit more insight into my background, I was raised in Bruce county by parents who were very involved in their community. From agricultural organizations like 4-H and Junior Farmers to church activities like CGIT and the choir, to minor sports like swimming, tennis and curling, we were taught to support the community that supports us. Being involved is just something you do.

I'd like to think I carried that through into my work life with involvement in a service club, church activities and fundraising organizations other than CHEO, just to name a few. I'd like to think that I am involved in my community and have a sense for the needs and wants of at least some members of that community.

I'd like to apply that knowledge to the Ontario Trillium Foundation and assist in making decisions on the applications submitted, whether it is starting projects, building on the success of a proven program, broadening access to community spaces or bringing about fundamental change.

Thank you.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you very much, Ms. Lamont. We will now begin questioning with Mr. Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Good morning. How are you today?

Ms. Norma Lamont: Good, thanks.

Mr. Wayne Gates: That's nice to hear.

My daughter is a coordinator for special needs in a Catholic school board. I'm very, very proud of the work that she does.

Ms. Norma Lamont: Yes, absolutely.

Mr. Wayne Gates: It's very tough work, but very rewarding. Very nice.

Don't feel special in this—if you were here for the first question, I ask this to everybody. I think it's important to ask. Do you belong to any political party?

Ms. Norma Lamont: At the moment I don't, no.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Have you ever donated to a political party?

Ms. Norma Lamont: Yes, I have.

Mr. Wayne Gates: What party would that be?

Ms. Norma Lamont: The Liberal Party.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Okay. Don't feel bad about that; we all make mistakes. It's okay.

Laughter.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Sorry, Jim. I had to get that out. Jim was late this morning; I just wanted to make sure he heard the question. We talk about that.

No, that's fine. Thank you very much. I appreciate you answering that, too.

I see that the witness has previous experience at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, including sitting as its vice-president of community development and director of special projects, just prior to your retirement. How long have you been retired?

Ms. Norma Lamont: Four years.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Are you enjoying it?

Ms. Norma Lamont: Absolutely.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Doing some travel?

Ms. Norma Lamont: Yes. Can you tell I have a tan?

Mr. Wayne Gates: It's funny. I talked to my wife this morning and she said—you guys will find this interesting. My wife said that she had a dream about me, that I went to the Dominican without her. I said, "Well, that would be hard," seeing that she's been to Jamaica this year, she's been to Punta Cana this year, and she's been to Florida this year. I said, "And you're mad in your dream that I actually went away?" It was kind of funny. She's going everywhere because she's retired as a school principal, and she's the same thing: travelling a lot and having a lot of fun. It's a little off the subject, but it's nice that you're enjoying your retirement years and looking at giving back to the community, which is equally as important.

What contribution does the witness believe they can bring to the Champlain grant review team?

Ms. Norma Lamont: I think, based on my experience with CHEO, being the recipient of funds, and working the community, I have a sense of what our community is interested in, what is good for our community—I shouldn't say what is good; what the people in our community think is good. I've met a lot of people through my work with CHEO, and I think I have a sense of what their hopes and dreams are and how the Trillium Foundation can maybe help with that.

Mr. Wayne Gates: It is my understanding that you will become part of the Champlain grant review team, which invested a total of \$8 million—it's a lot of money—in 58 grants during the 2015-16 year in this area of the province. Could you discuss some of the possible challenges that this particular area of the province may be

facing and how the Trillium grant program may be able to address those issues with its investment decisions?

Ms. Norma Lamont: Any comments I make would be based on nothing, because I'm not familiar, not having been with the review team.

I'm going to say maybe rural—and I really don't know, because I haven't researched that. I'm looking at being a new member of the team.

0940

Mr. Wayne Gates: Well, one thing that I'm sure you're aware of is that there is a large francophone community.

Ms. Norma Lamont: Absolutely

Mr. Wayne Gates: It's one of the largest, if not the largest, in Ontario. Obviously it's got a lot of university graduates there.

One of the stats that I found interesting that was provided by our team here that gives us some documentation is that your unemployment level in that area is 5.9%, where the provincial rate is 6.4%. So that's good news for sure. If the unemployment rate is lower, that means that a lot more young people are getting jobs in that area. That certainly is good news for kids and young families in that area.

I can tell you that I've had—not necessarily myself, but certainly my staff has worked very closely with children, and they do great work. They get back to you all of the time. There's lots of communication. You're applying for an organization that I think does really good work.

The last question I'm going to ask about—and maybe you don't have an answer to this, but I noticed that you talked about when you were growing up and the importance of volunteering, whether that be in the community or at the church or a service club. We have a lot of problems with volunteers today. All of the service clubs are hurting. Churches are hurting. How do we, maybe in your humble opinion—how do you think we can get more people volunteering, in particular, more young people volunteering? It's rewarding. It's something you talk about when you get older as well, even though you're still doing it, as you're a senior—or retired, in your case. Any ideas on how we can get more young people involved with volunteering?

Ms. Norma Lamont: I think we're going in the direction with the mandatory hours from high school; that's one area. If young people are having fun being involved in a charitable organization or doing something for the community, they'll take that forward.

When we were growing up, it was just something you did. It wasn't a job. It wasn't, "You have to do this." It was just something—because everybody else was doing it. If you were going to be part of the cool kids, then you got involved. I think that somehow we have to bring that back to kids so that they understand that this is a good thing. You get more out of it than what you're giving. We have to instill that sense in them somehow.

Now, how we do that, I'm not exactly sure. Making it mandatory maybe is not the right way, but if you can get the kids involved in organizations and they have fun,

they'll do it. There are a lot of them that do; I've met some great kids over the years.

Mr. Wayne Gates: There are a lot of good young volunteers; I agree.

Ms. Norma Lamont: Absolutely.

Mr. Wayne Gates: We just need more of them. I think your point is well taken around making it fun. It's going to be rewarding, we know that, but sometimes you just have to make it fun as well.

I appreciate your answering the questions. Thank you.

Ms. Norma Lamont: Thank you.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): We'll now turn it over to the government side. We will begin questioning with Ms. Vernile. You have six minutes and 30 seconds.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Thank you, Ms. Lamont. It's very impressive to see your demonstrated community involvement. That is something that Liberals do, right? They like to get involved and be concerned about society.

My question was actually just asked by Mr. Gates. I want to ask you a bigger-picture question, and that is to look at volunteering and service to the community and the concern that we don't have as many young people who are getting involved. You mentioned a few ways to do that. You touched on this mandatory involvement that you have to do when you're in high school. Do you want to elaborate on that? Do you think that that's a good idea or not a good idea, when they are told that they have to do it?

Ms. Norma Lamont: I kind of waffled on that in my previous answer. At the start, when it was first introduced, I thought it was a good thing, and I still do. I think often, now, with society being what it is, parents are so busy. Both parents are working, if it is a two-parent family, and lots of times it's not. There is maybe not as much time for them to instill—they don't have the time to help their kids get involved in things. So if kids grow up not knowing, somehow, whether it's the school system or someplace else, there has to be a way of introducing them to the idea of getting involved in service clubs or school activities or minor sports, or whatever it happens to be. Probably that has to be done through the school system, if it's not being done at home.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: I think you're absolutely right. The parents have to model this behaviour. Years ago, when my three kids—they're now in their twenties, but when they were younger, I looked for an activity that we could do as a family volunteering, and we decided to help out at the local soup kitchen in Kitchener. Every Thursday afternoon after school and after work, regardless of who had how much homework or who was tired or who was grumpy, we went to the soup kitchen, rolled up our sleeves and for two hours we peeled potatoes and chopped carrots and did whatever they told us to do. At first, the kids were—

Ms. Norma Lamont: And felt better afterwards.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Well, they felt a little grumpy at the beginning, but once they got involved and saw the outcome of their work and how it was impacting people, they loved it. When you plant the seed when they're early, it will carry with them for life. Would you agree?

Ms. Norma Lamont: Yes, I agree. Absolutely.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Thank you very much for putting your name forward and, even in retirement, finding time to do this.

Ms. Norma Lamont: Thank you.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you, Ms. Vernile. We're now going over to the opposition. Mr. Pettapiece—oh, Mr. Oosterhoff.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Close. He's better-looking.

I'd like to go back to the point that Mr. Gates made, very briefly. How much do you think you've donated to the Liberal Party?

Ms. Norma Lamont: Oh, gee. Last, last—

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: That's okay.

Ms. Norma Lamont: Okay.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: It's around \$16,000, so I'm just curious—

Ms. Norma Lamont: Really?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Yes.

Ms. Norma Lamont: Oh, wow.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Most of it to the feds.

Ms. Norma Lamont: Okay, yes.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: So I'm curious: How do you think this is going to impact your decision-making? How are you going to set aside your obvious partisan interests in serving on the Trillium Foundation grant review team?

Ms. Norma Lamont: Oh, I hope that's not going to impact at all.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: You received the Roger M. Kirkpatrick Memorial Award in 2007 from the Liberal Party for being a dignified, ethical and diligent Liberal organizer who chaired meetings, encouraged others and frequently defused difficult situations, which is—obviously we're all involved in politics to some extent or another, but my question is more: Do you think that's going to have an impact on the decisions that you make at the Trillium Foundation?

Ms. Norma Lamont: It will have the impact of looking at it from a volunteer point of view.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: You think that's the only aspect of that?

Ms. Norma Lamont: Yes.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Okay. One of my other questions is, Champlain has an enormous francophone population. I noticed that you said you're not bilingual?

Ms. Norma Lamont: That's correct.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Do you think that will have an impact on being able to work in this area, or not really?

Ms. Norma Lamont: It will have a minor impact. I always wished that I was bilingual in my former job, because obviously it's not just anglophones who are contributing to the hospital. There is a large population of francophones. I attended lots of their events and got along very well with them. They were very patient with me when I could only speak to them in one of the official languages.

It delays in terms of when you get a piece of paper that's in a language you don't understand that has to be

translated. There are delays, but I don't think it will impact my ability to communicate and work with them.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Mr. Pettapiece, please.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: It's good to see you again. I was to a place called Aptus yesterday. I don't know whether you're aware of—

Ms. Norma Lamont: Atlas?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Aptus: A-P-T-U-S. It's in Toronto. It's with special needs people. I've found that to be quite a rewarding portfolio, as I am the critic for community and social services.

I see that you are still on a board and you're on OASIS. I want to get to the volunteer business—you belong to a lot of volunteer organizations—because this is certainly a time factor here. Do you believe you have the time to spend with this new appointment, if you get it?

Ms. Norma Lamont: That's one of the things I looked at when I was—I'll make the time. I'll just make the time.

0950

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: In volunteer work, we have found—I belong to a service club in my hometown. We went through the issue of trying to get people to come to the club. We would go up and down like yo-yos. It was interesting, if you charted when were high and when we were low—it was when we had no project to work on. We were always at a high level when we had a project to work on.

Aside from the fun part of it, you've got to have something to work for. I didn't really need to go out for two dinners a month and play cards. I think there needs to be some kind of a focus. That's something that a lot of service groups face: identifying a project and then getting at it. I think that tends to attract people to the service club.

Ms. Norma Lamont: I agree.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I think that's very important. The 40-hour business in high school, I think was a great—and it still is, I guess. We've tried to use those young folks in our service club when we were doing different things. We found that a bunch of them—I don't know the numbers here, but it seemed to me to be a little high—would wait till their last year of high school to try to get their hours in. So there may need to be a little tweaking of that. Have you seen that?

Ms. Norma Lamont: Yes, in CHEO. We'd get these panicked phone calls: "My son/daughter is graduating this year but doesn't have 40 hours. Have you got some work they can do at CHEO, in one of your events, to help us make up this 40 hours?" Sometimes we could make it work and sometimes we couldn't.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: That's what we ran into too. The timing wasn't great. I think they could break it up into 10 hours a year or something like that to get that done.

There are a lot of other things that young folks can do these days, certainly. Like you say, their parents or caregivers are working all the time. But they've got all these devices they could fool around with and all this jazz. There's nothing wrong with that type of thing, but it can be overdone.

I want to congratulate you for your volunteer work. This was really great. Like I say, I get a real thrill going to some of these places and speaking with the clients, if I can call them that. They have so much to offer and you can really see it coming out, and I certainly saw that yesterday. Thank you.

Ms. Norma Lamont: Thank you.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you, Ms. Lamont. You may step down. That concludes the time allotted for your interview.

We will now consider the concurrence for Mr. William Greenhalgh, nominated as vice-chair, Public Accountants Council for the Province of Ontario. Would someone please move the concurrence? Mr. Qaadri.

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Mr. William Greenhalgh, nominated as vice-chair, Public Accountants Council for the Province of Ontario.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Congratulations, Mr. Greenhalgh.

We will now consider the concurrence for Ms. Norma Lamont, nominated as member, grant review team—Champlain—Ontario Trillium Foundation. Would someone please move the concurrence? Mr. Qaadri.

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Norma Lamont, nominated as member, grant review team—Champlain—Ontario Trillium Foundation.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Congratulations, Ms. Lamont.

We have two deadline extensions to vote on here today. Do we have unanimous agreement to extend the deadline to consider the intended appointment of Lynne Anderson, nominated as member, Ontario Energy Board? Her current deadline expires April 2, 2017. I'm seeking unanimous agreement to extend the certificate to May 2, 2017. Do we have unanimous agreement? Yes. Thank you.

Do we have unanimous agreement to extend the deadline to consider the intended appointment of Michael Janigan, nominated as member, Ontario Energy Board? The certificate deadline currently expires April 2, 2017. Seeking unanimous agreement to extend the certificate to May 2, 2017: Do we have unanimous agreement? Yes. Thank you very much.

If there is no further business, the committee is adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 0955.



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